Why we're no longer pursuing the Quayside project — and what's next for Sidewalk Labs

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In October 2017, Sidewalk Labs and Waterfront Toronto set out to plan a shared vision for Quayside, a fundamentally more sustainable and affordable community resulting from innovations in technology and urban design. Since the project began, I've met thousands of Torontonians from all over the city, excited by the possibility of making urban life better for everyone.

So it is with great personal sadness and disappointment that I share that Sidewalk Labs will no longer pursue the Quayside project. Top highlight

For the last two-and-a-half years, we have been passionate about making Quayside happen — indeed, we have invested time, people, and resources in Toronto, including opening a 30-person office on the waterfront. But as unprecedented economic uncertainty has set in around the world and in the Toronto real estate market, it has become too difficult to make the 12-acre project financially viable without sacrificing core parts of the plan we had developed together with Waterfront Toronto to build a truly inclusive, sustainable community. And so, after a great deal of deliberation, we concluded that it no longer made sense to proceed with the Quayside project, and let Waterfront Toronto know yesterday.

While we won't be pursuing this particular project, the current health emergency makes us feel even more strongly about the importance of reimagining cities for the future. I believe that the ideas we have developed over the last two-and-a-half years will represent a meaningful contribution to the work of tackling big urban problems, particularly in the areas of

affordability and sustainability. This is a vital societal endeavor, and Sidewalk Labs will continue our work to contribute to it.

On these fronts, we've already started innovative companies addressing urban mobility, next-generation infrastructure, and community-based healthcare, and invested in startups working on everything from robotic furniture to digital electricity. We continue to work internally on factory-made mass timber construction that can improve housing affordability and sustainability, a digital master-planning tool that can improve quality of life outcomes and project economics, and a new approach to all-electric neighborhoods.

The Quayside project was important to us, and this decision was a difficult one. We are grateful to the countless Torontonians who contributed to the project, and for the support we received from community groups, civic leaders, and local residents. Sidewalk Labs was attracted to Toronto by the diversity, growth, and opportunity the city has to offer, and that view has been affirmed and strengthened at every step along the way. Toronto is one of the world's great centers of technological innovation, and nothing about this decision will in any way diminish that.

We owe particular thanks to everyone at Waterfront Toronto for their efforts. They have worked tirelessly alongside us to shape Quayside in the best interests of the city. We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to the devoted public servants at all three levels of government who were involved in this project for their willingness to pursue big ideas while always looking out for the public good.

Finally, words cannot capture my appreciation for the work of the entire Sidewalk Labs team, who have given so much to bring our shared vision for Quayside to life.

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